

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 15, 19, and 20 are independent.

Inventors Rider and Lacavera, and the undersigned would like to thank Examiners Ashburn and O'Neill for the cordial and productive interview of February 8, 2001. The Examiners' helpful comments and suggestions were instrumental in preparing this response.

As discussed at the interview, support for the "motion picture theatre screening room", and "interactive, computer-controlled video games", may be found at page 1 of the specification. Support for the "updated game images" may be found at page 6, line 9 of the specification.


Applicants respectfully traverse the objection to the specification and the 35 USC § 112, first paragraph rejection, on the grounds that a person of ordinary skill in the art would conclude that the specification amendments and the newly-adding claims are fully supported in the specification as originally filed. Nevertheless, and not in response to a statutory requirement, Applicants have amended Claims 15-22 in order to clarify the claimed structure and/or function.

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The claims have been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as discussed at the interview. Should the Examiner have any additional questions or suggestions regarding claim language, he is respectfully encouraged to telephone the undersigned.

Claims 1-22 were rejected as being unpatentable over Shaaaj, Chaum, and Crudington, for the reasons noted at pp. 5-6 of the Office Action. While Applicants appreciate the Examiner's detailed discussion of the art as applied to the claims, for the reasons noted at the interview, Applicants respectfully traverse all art rejections. Note that Applicants have amended the claims, not in response to a statutory requirement, but to further clarify the structure and function according to the present invention.

Each of the independent claims recites a novel combination of structure and function whereby interactive computer-controlled gaming is provided on the projection screen of a motion picture theatre screening room. The motion picture projection screen displays both projected motion pictures and projected video game images. Game software is executed by a computer that enables the motion picture theatre screening room audience to participate in a single game that is projected on the motion picture theatre projection screen. Structure and/or function are provided for



allowing the screening room audience to provide manual inputs which are used by the computer to update the game images projected onto the screen, in an interactive manner. The screen displays the projected updated game images in an idle time when no motion picture images are being displayed, preferably so that all members of the audience may interactively participate in a single game.

In contrast, Shaaaj discloses apparatus for displaying a video game on a CRT monitor bank in a bar. While the monitor bank may comprise a single display screen, no images are projected on the screen. Rather, the single screen must comprise a non-projected display, such as an LCD display. Importantly, Shaaaj fails to disclose or suggest the dual use of a motion picture projection screen to project both motion pictures and interactive game images. The remaining art of record fails to cure the deficiencies of Shaaaj. For example, Chaum discloses a motion picture theatre system wherein a camera is disposed behind the projection screen to record members of the audience who raise their hands in a bingo-type game. Such "interactivity", is not accomplished by means of user stations disposed at seats in a motion picture theatre screening room. Likewise, the remaining art of record in the case fails to disclose or suggest the novel combination of features set forth in each of the independent claims.

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Additionally, Applicants respectfully point out that no specific suggestion or motivation has been shown, on the record, which would lead the person of ordinary skill in the art to produce the claimed invention, absent hindsight reconstruction. Such a suggestion or motivation must be shown before a combination can be made under 35 USC § 103.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance and a Notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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Marked-up Claims



1. (Once Amended) A large screen, interactive, computer-controlled, motion picture theatre video gaming system [for an entertainment facility], comprising:

a motion picture projection screen, disposed in a motion picture theatre screening room, for displaying projected motion pictures and projected video game images;

[a)] a computer;

[b)] video game software executed by said computer, said video game software enabling [substantially all] plural members of an audience in the motion picture theatre screening room [said entertainment facility] to interactively participate in a single video game projected onto said motion picture theatre projection screen;

[c)] a plurality of user stations respectively disposed at a plurality of seats in the motion picture theatre screening room such that users at said stations may observe said motion picture projection screen, each user station having [communication means, and also having interface means] a manual input device for receiving manual user input and transmitting same [transmitted] from said each user station

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[stations] to said computer [via said communication means] and said computer, in response to receipt of the user inputs, updating the video game software to provide updated video game images ;

[d)] a video game projector, disposed in the motion picture theatre, and connected to said computer, [said computer aggregating said user input to create] for projecting the updated video game images [for display by said projector] onto said projection screen; and

[e)] [a] said screen displaying the projected updated [upon which said] video game images [can be displayed by said projector] during a time when no motion picture is being projected on said screen, such that [all of] said updated video images are [fully] visible from each of said user stations.

2. (Once Amended) A motion picture theatre video gaming system, comprising:

a motion picture projection screen disposed in a motion picture theatre screening room, for displaying motion pictures and video game images;

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[a)] a computer disposed in the motion picture theatre;

[b)] video game software executed by said computer, said video game software enabling up to at least a few dozen users in the motion picture theatre screening room to participate in a single video game projected onto said screen;

[c)] a plurality of game user stations disposed in the motion picture theatre screening room so that users at said game user stations may observe said screen, each game user station having [communication means, and also having] interface means for receiving game user manual inputs [input transmitted from said user stations] and transmitting them to said computer [via said communication means], and said computer, after receipt of the game user inputs, updating said video game software to interactively produce updated video game images;

[d)] a video game projector receiving the updated video images from said computer and projecting them onto said screen [connected to said computer, said computer aggregating

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user input to create video images for display by said projector]; and

[e)] [a] said screen [upon which] displaying said updated video images during an idle time between motion picture screenings [can be displayed by said projector such that all of said video images are fully visible from each of said user stations].

3. (Once Amended) A motion picture theatre audience gaming system, comprising:

a motion picture projection screen, disposed in a motion picture theatre screening room, for displaying motion picture images and interactive game images;

[a)] a computer;

[b)] interactive game software executed by said computer, said game software enabling a plurality of members of the motion picture audience [up to hundreds of users] to participate interactively in a single game displayed on said screen at a time when no motion picture images are being displayed on said screen;

[c)] a plurality of user stations disposed in

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the motion picture screening room and having structure for receiving manual user inputs and transmitting same to said computer, and said computer, in response to receipt of the user inputs, generating updated game images [each having communication means, and also having interface means for receiving user input transmitted from said user stations to said computer via said communication means];

[d)] a game projector connected to said computer, for projecting the updated game images onto said screen [said computer aggregating said user input to create video images for display by said projector]; and

[e)] said [a] screen displaying [upon which] said updated game [video images at a time between motion picture screenings [can be displayed by said projector] such that [all of said] the updated game [video] images are [fully] visible from each of said user stations.

4. (Once Amended) A motion picture theatre gaming system [An entertainment facility], comprising:

[a)] a motion picture screening room [an

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enclosure] having a plurality of seats to accommodate [an] a motion picture audience, said motion picture screening room including a motion picture projection screen for displaying projected motion picture images and projected game images;

[b)] a plurality of gaming [user] stations disposed adjacent at least some of said seats, each gaming station including manual input structure for receiving manual input from a user seated in a corresponding seat;

[c) a screen, the total area of said screen visible from each of said user stations;]

[d)] a game projection system for projecting game images on said screen at a time when no motion picture images are being displayed on said screen; and

[e)] a game computer connected to each of said gaming [user] stations and said game projection system, said game computer interactively updating [controlling] the game images projected on said screen in response to [,] said computer receiving user input [for display on said screen] from said gaming [user] stations.

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5. (Once Amended) The system [entertainment facility] of claim 3 wherein said user stations are located at a plurality of [said] seats disposed in said motion picture theatre.

6. (Once Amended) A method for playing [a] an interactive, large screen video game in a motion picture theatre screening room [an entertainment facility], said method comprising the steps of:

providing a projection screen in said motion picture theatre screening room, for displaying projected motion picture images and projected game images;

[a]] providing a plurality of user stations at a
corresponding plurality of [said] seats in said motion picture theatre screening room [entertainment facility];

[b]] providing a user interface at each user station to receive manual user input from said each [of said] user station [stations];

[c]] integrating game [the] images from said game with said user input, by means of a computer; and

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[d)] projecting the results of said integrating on said projection [a single] screen at a time when no motion picture images are being projected onto the screen, said results being visible from each of said user stations.

7. (Once Amended) The method of claim [3] 6 wherein said [entertainment facility is a movie theatre] computer interactively integrates input from said user stations.

8. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 1, further comprising a game programming interface, said game programming interface comprising a set of software routines, said routines forming a portion of said video game software, said routines providing a programmable interface to said computer, said user stations, said projector and said screen.

9. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 1, wherein said user stations include structure for accepting [accept] a [game] card to validate a user to play said game software.

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10. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 9, further comprising purchase/credit stations, said stations having credit means to permit a user to add credit to said [game] card.

11. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 1 further comprising a database, said database containing demographic information for each user of said gaming system.

12. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 1 wherein said interface means further comprise audio means, said audio means providing sound to said user.

13. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 1 [wherein said facility is a movie theatre] further comprising encryption structure for encrypting input from a user station.

14. (Once Amended) The [gaming] system of claim 1 wherein said interface means further comprise a virtual reality interface, said virtual reality interface providing to the user a virtual reality environment.

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15. (Once Amended) A method of providing large screen, interactive computer gaming in a screening room of a motion picture [operating a commercial] theatre having a projection screen on which motion pictures and game images can be displayed, said method comprising the steps of:

[(a)] providing public access to user stations at a plurality of seats in said motion picture theatre screening room;

[(b)] accepting and validating identification from users at said user stations, allowing said users to engage as players in computer game play displayed on said screen;

[(c)] initiating said game play when said screen is not being used to display a motion picture;

[(d)] accepting manual input provided by said players via said user stations;

[(e)] in response to said manual inputs, aggregating the user inputs [said input] to create game images;

[(f)] projecting the created [displaying said]

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game images on said projection screen at a time when no motion pictures are being projected thereon; and

[(g)] terminating said game play before said screen is to be used to display a motion picture.

16. (Once Amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said game images comprise video game images [are displayed on said screen].

17. (Once Amended) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of debiting said [such] user identification in an amount required as payment to engage in said game play.

18. (Once Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein said user identification comprises [is] a smart card, a credit card, or a debit card.

19. (Once Amended) An interactive motion picture theatre entertainment facility, comprising:

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a motion picture theatre screening room, having a projection screen and a plurality of seats arranged in rows facing said projection screen, said projection screen being capable of displaying motion picture images and game images;

a projector for [showing] projecting motion pictures on said projection screen;

a game computer;

game software executed by said computer;

a plurality of user stations disposed in said screening room, each having [communication means, and also having] interface means for receiving manual user input, said computer, in response to said manual user input, generating updated game images; and

means connected to said computer for displaying the updated game [video] images on said screen [created by said computer in response to said user input] at a time when motion pictures are not being displayed on said screen.

20. (Once Amended) A method of providing interactive entertainment in a motion picture theatre

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screening room [operating a commercial theatre] having a plurality of seats, comprising the steps of:

at some times projecting [displaying] a motion picture upon a projection screen in said motion picture theatre screening room [theatre] after admitting members of the public to view said motion picture [upon payment of an admission fee]; and

at other times, operating computer game software that projects [displays] computer game images on said [a] screen in said motion picture screening room [theatre] in response to user manual inputs received from user stations disposed adjacent at least some of said seats, the images being created by a computer that responds to player input from the [a plurality of] user stations [located at said seats].

21. (Once Amended) The method of claim 20 wherein members of the public are allowed to engage as players in said computer game at said user stations after having a payment authorization [an identification] accepted and validated.

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22. (Once Amended) The method of claim 20 wherein members of the public are allowed to engage as players in said computer game at said user stations after having a payment authorization [an identification] accepted, validated, and debited in an amount corresponding to a fee charged for engaging in said computer game.

[23. (New) A method of doing business inside a motion picture theatre, comprising the steps of:

receiving payment from a motion picture theatre patron for playing an interactive, computer-controlled game displayed on a projection screen in a motion picture theatre screening room;

B² authorizing game play at a user station disposed at a seat in the motion picture theatre screening room, after the receipt of payment step;

accepting game inputs from a user at the user station authorized in the authorizing step;

inputting the accepted game inputs into a game computer, and interactively updating the displayed game in response to the inputted game inputs;

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projecting the updated game onto said motion picture theatre screen at a time when no motion pictures are being displayed on the screen.

24. (New) A method of doing business in a motion picture theatre, comprising the steps of:

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accepting a plurality of interactive game inputs from a plurality of user stations respectively disposed at a plurality of seats disposed in a screening room of the motion picture theatre;

providing the accepted plurality of interactive game inputs to a game computer, said computer updating a computer-controlled game in response to the plurality of interactive game inputs;

generating an updated game display from the updated computer-controlled game;

in an idle period between one motion picture screening and a following motion picture screening, projecting the updated game display onto a motion picture screen in the motion picture theatre screening room.]

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